

Two Poems · *Mara Breton*

PHYLUM: ARTHROPODA

This tired crust with ugly creases lined
was smooth once, like a frozen pond: this rind,
and permeable to no one, nothing: blind
as All-Wise God, but not as well-refined.
Lover, who stole my heart and lost it, too,
who comes back with regrets and curlicue
delusions (give me *your* heart? Shift it to
this empty chitin drifting in the dew?)
I swear were I a nymph (could peel myself
from me and face you proudly from some shelf
with compound eyes and mandibles and sylph-
like wings, renewed) I would take vengeance, Elf
of love. But I am an old bug, old
of you: unarmed, unbrained, unlegged, unsouled.